

2008 Press Release Binder

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2008, 11:30 a.m.

Contact: Leah Bucco-White
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Attorney General Bruning Praises U.S. Supreme Court's Second Amendment Ruling on Gun Rights

Note: Sound bites on this topic will be available shortly at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning issued the following comment today on the U.S. Supreme Court's decision declaring Americans have a right to own guns for self-defense and hunting. The ruling strikes down the District of Columbia's ban on handguns.

"The Supreme Court affirmed what most Americans have always believed. The Second Amendment means what it says - we have a constitutional right to own guns in this country," said Bruning. "The ruling throws cold water on those who want to restrict our freedom in America to bear arms."

Nebraska joined Texas and 29 other states earlier this year in the filing of a "friend of the court" brief arguing against the ban.

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2008, 5:45 p.m.

Contact: Leah Bucco-White
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Attorney General Bruning to Work With the Legislature on Solution for Effective Death Penalty

Note: Sound bites on this topic will be available shortly at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning announced today that he will not seek U.S. Supreme Court review of the Nebraska Supreme Court's decision finding the electric chair unconstitutional in *State v. Mata*.

"My primary goal is to ensure Nebraska has the ability to carry out the death penalty," said Bruning. "While I believe Chief Justice Heavican was correct as a matter of law in his dissent in *Mata*, at this point the resources of my office can best be used in developing a legislative solution. The U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding lethal injection as a constitutional method of execution in *Baze v. Kentucky* gave us the perfect roadmap for changing the law."

Bruning said he will work with the Governor and the Legislature to craft a constitutional method for their consideration. The Nebraska Supreme Court made clear in the *Mata* opinion that Nebraska's death penalty remains in effect, all that's required is a constitutional means of enforcement.

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 20, 2008, 6:00 p.m.

Contact: Leah Bucco-White
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Attorney General Bruning Comments on Crime and Law Enforcement Funding Being Left Out of Spending Bill

Note: Sound bites on this topic will be available shortly at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning issued the following comment on the House of Representatives decision to leave a boost in Byrne Justice Assistance Grant funding out of a supplemental spending bill.

"I'm deeply disappointed the House of Representatives doesn't recognize Byrne funding as critical in our fight against drugs and violent crimes. Without this funding, the safety of Nebraskans and local law enforcement is compromised. I'm hopeful the federal government will come to its senses and recognize public safety as something worthy of a top priority in funding decisions."

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 19, 2008, 4:30 p.m.

Contact: Leah Bucco-White
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*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

Attorney General Bruning Will March in NEBRASKAland DAYS Parade in North Platte Saturday, June 21 at 2:00 p.m. MDT

WHAT: NEBRASKAland Days Parade

WHEN: Saturday, June 21 at 2 p.m.

WHERE: Memorial Park in Downtown North Platte

WHO: Attorney General Jon Bruning will march in parade

HISTORY: NEBRASKAland Days is a celebration of Nebraska and its heritage. Tens of thousands of spectators come to North Platte to participate in the festivities including: art shows, rodeos, concerts, a carnival and parades.

***Bruning will be available for media interviews from 1:30 – 1:45 at the corner of Memorial Park and 4th street.

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 18, 2008, 3:45 p.m.

Contact: Leah Bucco-White
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Attorney General Bruning Named President-Elect of National Association of Attorneys General

Note: A sound bite on this topic is available at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning was named president-elect of the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) this afternoon at the group's summer meeting.

"Attorneys general are uniquely situated to lead the way in building a stronger and safer future for our states and our families, said Bruning. "I consider this a privilege and an honor. I look forward to working with all the attorneys general on issues that affect us on both the state and national level."

Bruning will serve as president-elect until he becomes president in June of 2009.

Most recently, Bruning served as vice president of NAAG. As vice president he was a member of the NAAG executive committee. He will continue to serve on the committee as president-elect.

NAAG facilitates interaction among attorneys general. The organization coordinates state-federal working groups, plans and provides continuing legal education for state lawyers, and serves as a liaison between state attorneys general and the federal government.

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 13, 2008, 1:00 p.m.

Contact: Leah Bucco-White

402-471-2067

Scott Gaines, Register of Deeds Office

402-441-7463

Attorney General Bruning Says Watch Out for Home Deed Scam

Note: A sound bite on this topic will be available shortly at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

(Lincoln, Neb) Attorney General Bruning wants to warn Nebraskans about a certified deed scam. The Lancaster County Register of Deeds Office received more than 20 requests for certified deeds on local homes from a company called National Deed Service in the last few months.

National Deed Service preys on vulnerable Nebraskans, often first-time homeowners, senior or non-English speaking households. The company contacts people by mail. The letter says homeowners should have a copy of a certified deed to document homeownership. If they don't, the company offers to provide one for \$69.50. The price of a certified deed through the Register of Deeds office is usually less than \$5. The Attorney General's Office has received several complaints.

"Beware of companies using public information for profit," says Bruning. "Deeds don't cost big bucks, and you're not required to have a certified copy."

Lancaster County Assessor/Register of Deeds Norm Agena says, "When our office receives a deed request from National Deed Service, it's basically too late. The homeowner has already been scammed and purchased an overpriced copy of his or her deed. Educating people ahead of time is the key to prevention."

Most homeowners receive a copy of their deed at closing when they purchase a home and the deed is also recorded in the Register of Deeds' permanent records. However, if a homeowner does want a copy of a deed, the Register of Deeds Office is a good starting point.

For more information on consumer protection issues go to: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>. If you've been a victim of a consumer-related scam, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 800-727-6432.

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 9, 2008, 12:15 p.m.

Contact: Holley Bolen
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holley.bolen@nebraska.gov

*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

Attorney General Bruning Will Hold Media Availability at the State Capitol Monday, June 9 at 2:30 p.m. CDT

WHAT: Media availability

WHEN: Monday, June 9 at 2:30 p.m. CDT

WHERE: State Capitol, Room 2115, Lincoln

TOPIC: The understanding reached between the Attorney General's Office and the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission in the investigation and prosecution of housing discrimination cases.

For a live audio feed, please dial (866) 247-0709 and code (402) 471-2682 at the prompt. Please remember to mute your phones, and please avoid placing the call on hold.

###

Dear Consumer:

Identity theft is happening here in Nebraska.

Recent arrests in Douglas and Saunders counties along with the recovery of thousands of pieces of stolen mail point to a possible identity theft ring.

Once you're a target of identity theft, your credit starts to suffer. Repairing the damage can be a long and frustrating process, but my office offers a tool that gives you the information you need to take action.

The Identity Theft Repair Kit offers victims a step-by-step guide to repairing credit along with tips on how to protect your personal information. The kit helps minimize damage to a person's good name and credit. Getting your hands on one is easy. Contact our Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-727-6432 or download it from www.ago.ne.gov.

Here are some of the best tips from the kit:

Protect Yourself:

- ✓ Never give personal information to someone you don't know unless you initiate the contact.
- ✓ Never leave mail in your mailbox overnight.
- ✓ Review a free copy of your credit report annually at www.annualcreditreport.com.
- ✓ Shred all documents that contain personal information, including credit card preapprovals.
- ✓ Never carry your Social Security number, birth certificate or passport with you, unless it's necessary.
- ✓ Only use Internet sites that are encrypted/secure.

Recovery:

- ✓ File a police report and keep a copy to support your claims to credit bureaus, creditors, debt collectors or other companies.
- ✓ Immediately close all accounts under the same name of the account that was breached.
- ✓ Contact all three credit bureaus -- Equifax, Experian and TransUnion -- to review your credit report and place a fraud alert on your credit file. A fraud alert requires businesses to verify identification before transactions.
- ✓ Talk to the bank and other credit bureaus to fix specific problems with your bank accounts or credit reports.
- ✓ File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission online or by phone:
www.consumer.gov/idtheft or 1-877-ID-THEFT.

Please contact our Consumer Protection Division toll-free at 1-800-727-6432 to receive your own Identity Theft Repair Kit or download it from www.ago.ne.gov.



Attorney General Jon Bruning

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 6, 2008, 4:30 p.m.

Contact: Leah Bucco-White
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MEDIA ADVISORY

Attorney General Bruning Will Speak at Sexual Assault Conference in Fremont Tuesday, June 10 at 9:00 a.m.

WHAT: "Unspoken Crimes: A Community Response to Sexual Assault in Nebraska"

Statistics show that only one in six sexual assault victims report the crime to law enforcement. One of the goals of this conference is to help increase the reporting of sexual assault. The conference will also focus on police protocol, victim assistance, prosecution methods, and the role of the advocate in rural communities.

Participants include: law enforcement and probation officers, victim advocates, medical and emergency personnel, and prosecutors.

WHEN: Tuesday, June 10 at 9 a.m.

WHERE: Midland Lutheran College Dining Hall
907 N. Logan St., Fremont

TOPIC: Sexual Assault

WHO: Attorney General Jon Bruning will open conference.

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 6, 2008, 11:00 a.m.

Contact: Leah Bucco-White

402-471-2067

Leah.bucco-white@nebraska.gov

Attorney General's Office Issues Legal Opinion on Private Property Rights and Petitioners

Note: Sound bites on this topic will be available shortly at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

(Lincoln, Neb.) The Attorney General's Office issued a legal opinion this morning on private property rights and petition circulators. The opinion was requested by Speaker of the Legislature Mike Flood of Norfolk.

"Speaker Flood asked our office for clarification on whether or not petition circulators and blockers have a right to remain on private property after being asked to leave," said Attorney General Jon Bruning. "The answer is no, and the law is clear. Private property owners have a right to restrict who comes on their property."

Both Speaker Flood's Office and the Attorney General's Office have received phone calls from concerned citizens and businesses. As the July 4 deadline for signatures approaches, the situation may become more contentious. Circulators and blockers may become more aggressive in where and how they gather signatures.

"The initiative process is an important tool for Nebraskans, but both sides need to act within the confines of the law," Bruning said.

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 5, 2008, 11:00 a.m.

Contact: Leah Bucco-White
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Attorney General's Office and NEOC Announce Agreement on Case Numbers

Note: Sound bites on this topic are available at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

(Lincoln, Neb.) The Attorney General's Office and the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission (NEOC), in cooperation with the Governor's office, recently compared case records and have resolved the final tally of cases.

Since 2003, the NEOC referred 14 housing discrimination cases to the Attorney General's Office for filing of a civil action. Of those 14 cases, the Attorney General's Office filed four. Of the remaining 10, two were settled by the NEOC before the case was filed, and the Attorney General's Office declined to file eight of the referrals. Additionally, the NEOC also referred 11 cases for enforcement of NEOC administrative orders pursuant to the Nebraska Revised Statutes § 20-339, and the Attorney General's Office filed all 11.

"I'm pleased that we were able to resolve the confusion about the number of cases referred to and filed by our office," said Attorney General Jon Bruning. "I want to thank the Governor's Office for facilitating this agreement."

NEOC Chairman Arnold Nesbitt said, "Reaching a final agreement on the disposition of cases will give us a solid foundation for our future working relationship and the implementation of the agreement we have been working on."

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Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 3, 2008, 3:30 p.m.

Contacts: Leah Bucco-White
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Jim Hegarty, BBB
402-898-8521

Attorney General and Better Business Bureau Warn Consumers About Home Repair and Home Improvement Scams

Note: Sound bites on this topic will be available shortly at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

(Lincoln, Neb) Has recent storm damage left your home in need of repair? Or, are you thinking about making some home improvements this spring? If so, it's important to make sure you don't fall into the hands of an unscrupulous con artist. While most home repair specialists and home improvement contractors perform a valuable service at a fair price, there are those who take advantage of their customers.

"Nebraskans take pride in their homes," said Attorney General Jon Bruning. "These con artists make promises to improve your home's value. But they'll walk away with your money and leave you with shoddy work or nothing at all."

The Nebraska Attorney General's office has received 59 complaints about home improvement contractors this year. The Better Business Bureau has received 31.

The Better Business Bureau keeps records of company reliability and customer complaints. Access to these reports and other tips can be found on its Web site at www.bbb.org.

"People work hard for their money and need to be cautious in selecting a contractor. Always check with the Better Business Bureau before you hire," says Jim Hegarty, President and CEO of the Better Business Bureau.

Here are some tips for consumers to follow if they're considering hiring a contractor:

- Always get at least three estimates. Compare the prices and what's included for the price. Be sure you are comparing apples and apples.
- Ask friends for recommendations.
- Make sure that the contractor is bonded, licensed and insured. Get proof in writing and call the agencies to confirm.
- Insist on a written contract. Contracts should include description of the work being done, materials used, and beginning and end dates. Don't sign an incomplete contract.
- Keep records of all contracts, correspondence, and anything related to the work done.
- Out-of-state contractors can be more difficult to contact if there's a problem. Be careful working with a contractor who doesn't have a local address.

Consumers who believe they have been victims of a contractor scam should contact either the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division toll-free at (800)727-6432 or the Better Business Bureau at (800)649-6814. Consumers can also file a complaint online at www.ago.ne.gov or www.bbb.org.

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JON BRUNING

Attorney General of Nebraska

June 2, 2008

"The Other Iraq"

By Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning

I take my responsibility of protecting Nebraskans and building a stronger, safer future for our families very seriously. With that responsibility comes an obligation to learn more about the threats and opportunities that surround us.

When we think of the Iraq where our troops are fighting and sacrificing their lives, many of us may picture what we see on the news. An Iraq plagued by unrest, roadside bombs and killing, along with innocent people suffering - a war-torn, destroyed country.

Recently, at the request of the Kurdistan Regional Government, I spent several days in the Kurdistan Region in northern Iraq, a region known as "the other Iraq." I was honored that government officials came to me as Nebraska's Attorney General to learn my perspective on the rule of law and how we go about serving our citizens.

What I saw in the Kurdistan Region was so inherently different from the rest of the country that I'm compelled to share my experience with Nebraskans.

Kurdistan is a place where there is personal security and political stability. There are more than 40 million Kurds who are the largest ethnic group in the world without their own country. The thriving democracy is a sign of success, and the people are reaching out to Americans. It is truly a wonderful place, and the Kurds are very kind and very much pro-United States.

History tells the story. From 1987 to 1989, Saddam Hussein released his wrath upon the Kurds with what was called the "Anfal Campaign." An estimated 180,000 Kurds were killed.

Reminders of this genocide are still there. I visited what's called the "Red House." It's a prison where Saddam's men tortured and killed thousands of Kurds. Today, what you see in Kurdistan are very few men in their 40s and 50s. The Kurds turned the other cheek many, many times despite Saddam's atrocities and didn't return those atrocities in kind.

A few months after Saddam invaded Kuwait in 1990, Americans came in to stop him. In 1991, we encouraged the Kurds to rebel against Saddam, and they did. Shortly after that, we abandoned them.

Saddam Hussein treated the Kurds brutally, yet they are prospering. They were at our right-hand during our initial effort against him in 2003. The Kurds have been open and honest. There haven't been any American deaths in the region for years nor has there been the violence that many believe is a hallmark of Iraq. However, peace and stability in the region are somewhat dependent on our presence there.

Earlier this month I met with Kurdistan's Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani. We had a frank discussion where he implored the American people to remain in Iraq until stability has been achieved across the entire country, not just in Kurdistan. He made it clear he thinks we're moving in the right direction.

Now, the Kurds want to increase connections with American state leaders and show that Kurdistan is not only safe, but its people are thriving and the area is ripe with opportunity for American investment.

Stability in the region and open communication among leaders not only helps the Kurds, it makes for a stronger America and a safer Nebraska.